UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/945,469	08/30/2001	Ryan Matthew LaSalle	05222.00130	3240

29638   7590   05/19/2006

BANNER & WITCOFF, LTD.
ATTORNEYS FOR CLIENT NO. 005222
10 S. WACKER DRIVE, 30TH FLOOR
CHICAGO, IL 60606

EXAMINER
BORISSOV, IGOR N

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3639	

DATE MAILED: 05/19/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

PTO-90C (Rev. 10/03)

	Application No.	**Applicant(s)**
Office Action Summary	09/945,469	LASALLE ET AL.
	Examiner	**Art Unit**	
	Igor Borissov	3639	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>06 March 2006</u>.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL.**   2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) <u>1-44</u> is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☒ Claim(s) <u>2-16,40,41 and 44</u> is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) <u>1,17-39,42 and 43</u> is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☐ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3)☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6)☐ Other: _____.

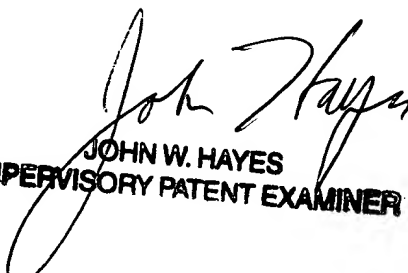PTOL-326 (Rev. 7-05)   Office Action Summary   Part of Paper No./Mail Date 20060512

DETAILED ACTION

In view of the Appeal brief filed on 3/06/2006 PROSECUTION IS HEREBY REOPENED.

To avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:

(1) file a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this Office action is non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this Office action is final); or,

(2) initiate a new appeal by filing a notice of appeal under 37 CFR 41.31 followed by an appeal brief under 37 CFR 41.37. The previously paid notice of appeal fee and appeal brief fee can be applied to the new appeal. If, however, the appeal fees set forth in 37 CFR 41.20 have been increased since they were previously paid, then appellant must pay the difference between the increased fees and the amount previously paid.

A Supervisory Patent Examiner (SPE) has approved of reopening prosecution by signing below:

JOHN W. HAYES
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 101 have been withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that

form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Tarrant (US 2002/0128939).

Claims 1. Tarrant teaches a computer-readable medium having computer-

executable instructions for performing a method for sharing investment information over

a computer network, said method comprising:

receiving an inquiry from the seeking entity (receiving a request from a second

user for data from relational database regarding the particular investment; said

relational database includes investment data received from users identified as members

of a hierarchy of sources organized by level of trustworthiness) [0018];

receiving a response indicating an existing relationship between the sought

entity and an intermediate entity (in response to the request from the second user,

transmitting the data from the relational database to a second user computer, wherein,

absent to a request from a second user for data of a specific level of trustworthiness,

the data transmitted comprise data from the users of the highest level of trustworthiness

[0018]; [0021];

said response being indicative of a trust level (level of trustworthiness) of the
sought entity and of a corresponding valuation criterion, the trust level being dependent
on the corresponding valuation criterion (reliability of information) [0047];

confirming and verifying that the relationship can be established and information
can be shared by enabling transmission of information between parties [0018]; [0021],
wherein said transmission of information is conducted in accordance with rights
management (aggregation rules) [0122]-[0128].

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all
obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set
> forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and
> the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the
> invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.
> Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

**Claims 21-24, 30, 35, 36, 42 and 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as
being unpatentable over Tarrant in view of Krysiak et al. (US 2002/0078003).**

Claim 21. Tarrant teaches a method for sharing investment information over a
computer network, comprising:

sending by a first computer to a second computer an inquiry to an intermediate
entity to determine if the intermediate entity has an existing relationship with the sought
entity (receiving a request from a second user for data from relational database
regarding the particular investment; said relational database includes investment data
received from users identified as members of a hierarchy of sources organized by level
of trustworthiness) [0018];

receiving by the first computer a response from the intermediate entity
indicating an existing relationship between the sought entity and an intermediate entity
(in response to the request from the second user, transmitting the data from the
relational database to a second user computer, wherein, absent to a request from a

second user for data of a specific level of trustworthiness, the data transmitted comprise data from the users of the highest level of trustworthiness [0018]; [0021];

said response being indicative of a trust level (level of trustworthiness) of the sought entity and of a corresponding valuation criterion, the trust level being dependent on the corresponding valuation criterion (reliability of information) [0047].

Tarrant does not explicitly teach establishing a business relationship with the sought entity based on the response.

Krysiak et al. teach a method for identifying information sources based on one or more trust networks associated with one or more knowledge domains, wherein a business relationship is established based upon an evaluation of trustworthy of a sought party [0014].

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant to include establishing a business relationship with the sought entity based upon an evaluation of trustworthy of a sought party, as disclosed in Krysiak et al, because it would advantageously allow to engage business with an entity having most trusted path connection, (Krysiak et al. [0014]), thereby minimizing possible financial losses.

Claim 22. Tarrant teaches all the limitations of claim 22, except specifying the degree of separations between the entities.

Krysiak et al. teach said method for identifying information sources based on one or more trust networks associated with one or more knowledge domains, wherein the multiple path connections (degree of separation) is provided for identifying the most trusted path connection (Figs. 11-14; [0070] – [0076]).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant to include identifying multiple path connections for identifying the most trusted path connection, as disclosed in Krysiak et al, because it would advantageously allow to collect the most reliable/trusted information about sought entity.

Claim 23. Tarrant teaches a method for sharing investment information over a computer network, comprising:

Querying, by a first computer to a second computer an inquiry to an intermediate entity to determine if the intermediate entity has an existing relationship with the sought entity (receiving a request from a second user for data from relational database regarding the particular investment; said relational database includes investment data received from users identified as members of a hierarchy of sources organized by level of trustworthiness) [0018];

receiving by the first computer a response from the intermediate entity indicating an existing relationship between the sought entity and an intermediate entity (in response to the request from the second user, transmitting the data from the relational database to a second user computer, wherein, absent to a request from a second user for data of a specific level of trustworthiness, the data transmitted comprise data from the users of the highest level of trustworthiness [0018]; [0021];

said response being indicative of a trust level (level of trustworthiness) of the sought entity and of a corresponding valuation criterion, the trust level being dependent on the corresponding valuation criterion (reliability of information) [0047].

Tarrant does not explicitly teach establishing a business relationship with the sought entity based on the response.

Krysiak et al. teach a method for identifying information sources based on one or more trust networks associated with one or more knowledge domains, wherein a business relationship is established based upon an evaluation of trustworthy of a sought party [0014].

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant to include establishing a business relationship with the sought entity based upon an evaluation of trustworthy of a sought party, as disclosed in Krysiak et al, because it would advantageously allow to engage business with an entity having most trusted path connection, (Krysiak et al. [0014]), thereby minimizing possible financial losses.

Claim 24. Tarrant teaches a method for sharing investment information over a computer network, comprising:

receiving at a second entity a contact identifying first entity (receiving at the central server User 1 ID) [0045];

checking a list of trusted entities by the second entity to determine if the first entity is a trusted entity (central server compares User 1's ID to a list of user Ids mapped to trustworthiness hierarchy levels) [0045].

Tarrant does not specifically teach querying another computer if the first entity is not a trusted entity and specifying the predetermined degree of separations (between the entities). Tarrant also does not explicitly teach establishing a business relationship with the sought entity based on the response.

Krysiak et al. teach said method for identifying information sources based on one or more trust networks associated with one or more knowledge domains, wherein the multiple path connections (degree of separation) is provided for identifying the most trusted path connection (Figs. 11-14; [0070] – [0076]). Also, Krysiak et al. teach that a business relationship is established based upon an evaluation of trustworthy of a sought party [0014].

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant to include identifying multiple path connections for identifying the most trusted path connection, as disclosed in Krysiak et al, because it would allow users to collect the most trusted information about sought entity. And it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant and Krysiak et al. to include establishing a business relationship with the sought entity based upon an evaluation of trustworthy of a sought party, as further disclosed in Krysiak et al, because it would advantageously allow to engage business with an entity having most trusted path connection, (Krysiak et al. [0014]), thereby minimizing possible financial losses.

Claim 42, Tarrant teaches said method, wherein each of trusted entities is associated with hierarchical levels of trustworthiness (which appears to have four levels: A, B, C and D), thereby indicating a predetermined minimum trust level [0045]; [0047].

Claim 30. Tarrant teaches a method for sharing investment information over a computer network, comprising:

receiving at a second entity a contact identifying first entity (receiving at the central server User 1 ID) [0045];

checking a list of trusted entities by the second entity to determine if the first entity is a trusted entity (central server compares User 1's ID to a list of user Ids mapped to trustworthiness hierarchy levels) [0045].

Tarrant does not specifically teach querying another computer if the first entity is not a trusted entity and specifying the predetermined degree of separations (between the entities). Tarrant also does not explicitly teach establishing a business relationship with the sought entity based on the response.

Krysiak et al. teach said method for identifying information sources based on one or more trust networks associated with one or more knowledge domains, wherein the multiple path connections (degree of separation) is provided for identifying the most trusted path connection (Figs. 6; 11-14; [0064]; [0070] – [0076]). Furthermore, the method steps disclosed in Krysiak et al. indicate continuity of the method. Also, Krysiak et al. teach that a business relationship is established based upon an evaluation of trustworthy of a sought party [0014].

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant to include identifying multiple path connections for identifying the most trusted path connection, as disclosed in Krysiak et al, because it would allow users to collect the most trusted information about sought entity. And it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant and Krysiak et al. to include establishing a business relationship with the sought entity based upon an evaluation of trustworthy of a sought party, as further disclosed in Krysiak et al, because it would advantageously allow to

engage business with an entity having most trusted path connection, (Krysiak et al. [0014]), thereby minimizing possible financial losses.

Claim 43, Tarrant teaches said method, wherein each of trusted entities is associated with hierarchical levels of trustworthiness (which appears to have four levels: A, B, C and D), thereby indicating a predetermined minimum trust level [0045]; [0047].

Claim 35. Tarrant teaches a method for sharing investment information over a computer network, comprising:

receiving at a second entity a contact identifying first entity (receiving at the central server User 1 ID) [0045];

checking a list of trusted entities by the second entity to determine if the first entity is a trusted entity (central server compares User 1's ID to a list of user Ids mapped to trustworthiness hierarchy levels) [0045];

verifying that the relationship can be established and information can be shared by enabling transmission of information between parties [0018]; [0021], wherein said transmission of information is conducted in accordance with rights management (aggregation rules) [0122]-[0128].

Tarrant does not specifically teach querying another computer if the first entity is not a trusted entity and specifying the predetermined degree of separations (between the entities). Tarrant also does not explicitly teach establishing a business relationship with the sought entity based on the response.

Krysiak et al. teach said method for identifying information sources based on one or more trust networks associated with one or more knowledge domains, wherein the multiple path connections (degree of separation) is provided for identifying the most trusted path connection (Figs. 11-14; [0070] – [0076]). Furthermore, the method steps disclosed in Krysiak et al. indicate continuity of the method. Also, Krysiak et al. teach that a business relationship is established based upon an evaluation of trustworthy of a sought party [0014].

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant to include identifying multiple path connections for identifying the most trusted path connection, as disclosed in Krysiak et al, because it would allow users to collect the most trusted information about sought entity. And it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant and Krysiak et al. to include establishing a business relationship with the sought entity based upon an evaluation of trustworthy of a sought party, as further disclosed in Krysiak et al, because it would advantageously allow to engage business with an entity having most trusted path connection, (Krysiak et al. [0014]), thereby minimizing possible financial losses.

Furthermore, Tarrant and Krysiak et al. do not specifically teach forwarding a "Do You Know" query to further companies. Examiner points out that there is no indication in the specification that said feature ("Do You Know" query) provides the advantage over the prior art. Without such indication, it appears that the use of said query appears to be an obvious variation of business relationship inquiries.

Claim 36. Tarrant teaches a method for sharing investment information over a computer network, comprising:

receiving at a second entity a contact identifying first entity (receiving at the central server User 1 ID) [0045];

checking a list of trusted entities by the second entity to determine if the first entity is a trusted entity (central server compares User 1's ID to a list of user Ids mapped to trustworthiness hierarchy levels) [0045];

Tarrant does not specifically teach querying another computer if the first entity is not a trusted entity and specifying the predetermined degree of separations (between the entities). Tarrant also does not explicitly teach establishing a business relationship with the sought entity based on the response.

Krysiak et al. teach said method for identifying information sources based on one or more trust networks associated with one or more knowledge domains, wherein the multiple path connections (degree of separation) is provided for identifying the most

trusted path connection (Figs. 11-14; [0070] – [0076]). Also, Krysiak et al. teach that a business relationship is established based upon an evaluation of trustworthy of a sought party [0014].

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant to include identifying multiple path connections for identifying the most trusted path connection, as disclosed in Krysiak et al, because it would allow users to collect the most trusted information about sought entity. And it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant and Krysiak et al. to include establishing a business relationship with the sought entity based upon an evaluation of trustworthy of a sought party, as further disclosed in Krysiak et al, because it would advantageously allow to engage business with an entity having most trusted path connection, (Krysiak et al. [0014]), thereby minimizing possible financial losses.

Claims 17-20, 25-29, 31-34 and 37-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tarrant and Krysiak et al. in view of Smith et al. (US 2002/0152086).

Claims 25-29 and 31-34. Tarrant and Krysiak et al. teach all the limitations of Claims 25-29 and 31-34, including a data base having a plurality of levels of trust (Tarrant; [0018]), except for plurality of entity roles, wherein each respective role in the plurality of roles defines a respective function that one entity fulfills to another entity.

Smith et al. teach a method and system for controlling a lifestyle of an electronic contract for a business relationship, wherein roles are associated with business relationship elements [0018].

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant and Krysiak et al. to include associating roles with business relationship so that each respective role defines a respective function that one entity fulfills to another entity, as disclosed in Smith et al., because binding the business relationship to terms and conditions of a legal contract would advantageously increase

the degree of trust of users in conducting business over the computer network (Smith et al. [0007]).

Claims 17 and 37. Tarrant teaches a computer-readable medium having instruction for performing a method for sharing investment information over a computer network, comprising:

configuring a capability domain and activity trust level data base for each of the at least two entities, the database having a plurality of levels of trust and a plurality of entity roles, the capability domain and activity trust level data base comprising a plurality of entries, each entry being indexed a level of trust, each said entry being indicative of a corresponding business process [0018]; [0122]-[0128];

creating at least one receiving component that obtains information from an entity trust list and a transactional trust list [0018].

Tarrant does not specifically teach the degree of separations between the entities, and a plurality of entity roles, wherein each respective role in the plurality of roles defines a respective function that one entity fulfills to another entity.

Krysiak et al. teach a system for identifying information sources based on one or more trust networks associated with one or more knowledge domains, wherein the multiple path connections (degree of separation) is provided for identifying the most trusted path connection (Figs. 11-14; [0070] – [0076]).

Smith et al. teach a system for controlling a lifestyle of an electronic contract for a business relationship, wherein roles are associated with business relationship elements [0018].

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant to include identifying multiple path connections for identifying the most trusted path connection, as disclosed in Krysiak et al, because it would allow users to collect the most trusted information about sought entity.

And it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tarrant and Krysiak et al. to include associating roles with business relationship so that each respective role defines a respective function that

one entity fulfills to another entity, as disclosed in Smith et al., because it would
increase the degree of trust of users in conducting business over the computer network
using a mechanism that tie the business relationship to terms and conditions of a legal
contract (Smith et al. [0007]).

Claims 18-20, see reasoning applied to Claim 17.

Claims 38-39, see reasoning applied to Claim 37.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 3/06/2006 with respect to independent claims 2, 13
and 44 have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, Claim Rejections
under 35 USC § 102 in respect to independent claim 44, and Claim Rejections under 35
USC § 103 in respect to independent claims 2 and 13 have been withdrawn.

Applicant's arguments filed 3/06/2006 with respect to claims 1, 17-39, 42 and 43
have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to the applicant's argument that the prior art of record fails to
disclose "sharing information between entities in accordance with *rights management*"
(claim 1), it is noted that Tarrant teaches *aggregation rules* which determine where
information should come from (from which source) [0122]. Furthermore, paragraphs
[0123] – [0128] of Tarrant disclose a list of various aggregation rules.

In response to the applicant's argument that Krysiak fails to teach anything about
specifying a predetermined degree of separation (claims 21-22), it is noted that Krysiak
explicitly teaches said feature. Specifically, Krysiak teaches said method for identifying
information sources based on one or more trust networks associated with one or more
knowledge domains, wherein the multiple path connections (*degree of separation*) is
provided for identifying the most trusted path connection (Figs. 11-14; [0070] – [0076]).

In response to the applicant's argument that Krysiak fails to teach "querying, by a first computer to a second computer, at least one trusted company to determine the existence of a relationship between the at least one trusted company and the unknown company" and "establishing a relationship with the unknown company in response to receiving the confirmation" (claim 23), it is noted that Krysiak teaches a computer-implemented method for identifying information sources based on one or more trust networks associated with one or more knowledge domains, said method is implemented over the computer network, wherein a *business relationship is established* based upon an *evaluation of trustworthy of a sought party* [0014].

In response to the applicant's argument that Krysiak fails to teach "querying, if the first entity is not a trusted entity and if a proxy parameter is indicative that trusted entities are permitted to forward requests to other trusted parties, the trusted entities and specifying a predetermined degree of separation." (claims 24 and 42), it is noted that Krysiak was applied for these feature. Specifically, Krysiak teaches that, during "trust search", if the first entity (Bob) has lower level of "trustworthiness" (self-evaluation) then the other party (Jane or Joe), the request is forwarded to said other parties with indicating a degree of separation [0070]; Figs. 10-14).

In response to the applicant's argument that Krysiak fails to teach "querying, another computer by the associated computer, if the first entity is not a trusted entity and if a proxy parameter is indicative that trusted entities are permitted to forward requests to other trusted parties, by the second entity at least a third entity of the trusted entities associated with the second entity, and specifying a predetermined degree of separation." (claims 30 and 43), it is noted that Krysiak discloses said method for identifying information sources based on one or more trust networks associated with one or more knowledge domains, wherein the multiple path connections (degree of separation) is provided for identifying the most trusted path connection (Figs. 11-14; [0070] – [0076]). Krysiak teach that a business relationship is established based upon an evaluation of trustworthy of a sought party [0014]. As per proxy parameter per se,

Krysiak teaches categorizing contacts by a parameter (numerically expressed) representing how well acquainted the user/entity being profiled is with the listed contacts (entities or individuals) [0064].

In response to the applicant's argument that Krysiak fails to teach "querying, by the first company, the third company to determine if the second company is known to the third company, specifying a maximum of a predetermined number of degrees of separation." (claims 35 and 36), it is noted that Krysiak was applied for these feature. Specifically, Krysiak teaches that, during "trust search", if the first entity (Bob) has lower level of "trustworthiness" (self-evaluation) then the other party (Jane or Joe), the request is forwarded to said other parties with indicating a degree of separation [0070]; Figs. 10-14). As per "verifying by the third company, a rights management model that exists between the third company and the first company", it is noted that Tarrant teaches *aggregation rules* which determine where information should come from (from which source) [0122] – [0128].

In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988)and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992).

In this case, Tarrant and Krysiak relate to assessing trustworthiness of information. The motivation to modify Tarrant to include identifying multiple path connections for identifying the most trusted path connection as disclosed in Krysiak would be allowing users to collect the most trusted information about sought entity.

And the motivation to modify Tarrant and Krysiak to include associating roles with business relationship so that each respective role defines a respective function that one entity fulfills to another entity, as disclosed in Smith, would be increasing the degree of

trust of users in conducting business over the computer network using a mechanism that tie the business relationship to terms and conditions of a legal contract (Smith; [0007]).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 102 in respect to independent claim 44, and Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 103 in respect to independent claims 2, 13 and 44 have been withdrawn.

Independent Claims 2, 13 and 44 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Regarding claim 2, the best prior art of record discloses a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing steps comprising: generating at least one entity trust list containing at least one characteristic of at least two of the entities, a level of trust being gauged by the at least one characteristic; generating at least one transactional trust list containing at least one parameter relative to an exchange between at least two of the entities through at least one degree of separation between the entities; and creating at least one receiving component that obtains information from the at least one entity trust list and the at least one transactional trust list in order to provide a framework for at least two of the entities to establish relationships between one another.

However, the prior art of record does not disclose that said at least one proxy parameter being indicative of an action that a trusted party can perform on behalf of a trusting party.

Regarding claim 13, the best prior art of record discloses a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing steps comprising:

generating an entity trust list containing at least one characteristic of at least two of the entities, a level of trust being gauged by the at least one characteristic; generating transactional trust list containing at least one parameter relative to an exchange between at least two of the entities through at least one degree of separation between the entities; generating a capability domain and activity trust level data base for each of the at least two entities, the data base having a plurality of levels of trust and a plurality of entity roles, the capability domain and activity trust data base comprising a plurality of entries, each entry being indexed by an entity role and a level of trust, each said entry being indicative of a corresponding business process; and creating at least one receiving component that obtains information from the entity trust list and the transactional trust list in order to provide a framework for at least two of the entities to establish relationships between one another.

However, the prior art of record does not disclose that said at least one proxy parameter being indicative of an action that a trusted party can perform on behalf of a trusting party.

Regarding claim 44, the best prior art of record discloses a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing steps comprising: creating a trust component that stores a trust level for each directly interconnected entity and at least one corresponding valuation criterion for determining the trust level and that obtains an associated trust level of a sought entity through an interconnected intermediate entity if the sought entity is not directly interconnected to the selected entity, the trust component comprising: an entity trust portion that includes a first data structure, the first data structure storing a distinguishing characteristic of each said directly interconnected entity, degree of trust being indicative of the distinguishing characteristic; and a transactional trust portion that includes a second data structure, the second data structure including a plurality of transactional parameters being indicative of criteria for conducting the new business relationship, and creating a transactional component for sharing information with the other interconnected entity.

However, the prior art of record does not disclose that said the plurality of transactional parameters included in the second data structure comprise: a proxy parameter that is indicative of an activity, the activity being performed by a trusted party on behalf of a trusting party; and a plurality of activity-trust parameters being indexed by an activity trust domain and a capability domain, the activity trust domain being indicative of an activity trust level, the capability domain being indicative of an activity process level, each activity trust parameter being indicative of an associated business process.

The dependent claims 3-12, 14-16, 40 and 41 are considered allowable as they are dependent and based of an allowable independent claims.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Igor Borissov whose telephone number is 571-272-6801. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John W. Hayes can be reached on 571-272-6708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

IB
5/14/2006

IGOR N. BORISSOV
PRIMARY EXAMINER